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INDIA SUPPORTS RUSSIAN OIL PRICE CAP, SAYS U.S. OFFICIAL

India has shown "great interest" in capping Russian oil price, US Deputy Secretary of Treasury Wally Adeyemo said on Friday

'IT WILL LOWER ENERGY PRICE FOR CONSUMERS'

The price cap will ensure that there is a reduction in revenues for Russia, the US official said after meeting Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. "In my conversation with Indian officials and policy makers about the price cap coalition, they have shown great interest as this is in line with India's objective of lowering energy price for consumers," Adeyemo said

U.S. TREASURY SECY MEETS FM SITHARAMAN

- During their meeting, Adeyemo and Sitharaman exchanged views on India's G20 presidency in 2023, global economic issues
- The US wants to cap Russian oil prices slightly above production cost, so that Moscow is unable to make windfall profits or use the oil revenue to fund its invasion of Ukraine

G20

INDIA WILL HOLD G20 PRESIDENCY FROM DEC 1, 2022 TO NOV 30, 2023

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School associations write to PM on graft in edu dept, want Nagesh out

DONNA EVA @ Bengaluru

AT least two Karnataka school organisations have written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on alleged corruption within the School Education and Literacy Department.

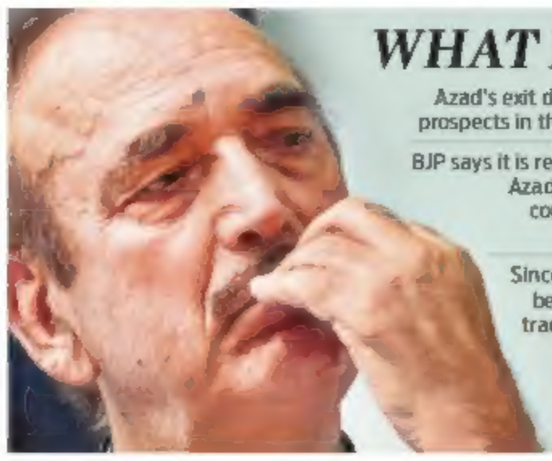
The Registered Unaided Private Schools Management Association (RUPSA) and Associated Managements of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka (KAMS) wrote to the PM on Friday, appealing for the removal of Education Minister BC Nagesh, and pointing out issues plaguing the department over the past two years. The issues pointed out included renewal of recognition of schools, building and fire safety compliance certificates, constant transfer of teachers, stoking of religious issues, harassment of schools and bribe demands from department officials. "The department has started new method of appointing 3-men committees. These panels visit schools in the guise of verification. If not bribed, they will find some lacunae and harass the schools," the RUPSA letter alleged.

KAMS stated in its letter that "unscientific, irrational, discriminatory and non-complaint norms" have been applied to schools. "The education ministry is impatient and understands the actual pathetic situation, and resolves many of the issues. Two different BJP ministers caused damage to budget schools rather than those schools which are commercialising education, allowing more and more investors to set up, which will directly cost more fees per child," the letter said. KAMS also mentioned delays in RTE reimbursements, failure to provide government prescribed textbooks on time and the department's failure to control corruption at every level.

Nagesh said proof must be provided. He said the issue of corruption can be solved if proper procedure is followed, and complaints are filed against relevant officers. He urged schools to file complaints with the education department or directly approach the Karnataka Lokayukta to file details on cases of bribery and corruption they have been facing.

Kempanna will face defamation case: Min

Agriculture Minister BC Patil on Friday said BJP MLAs will file a defamation case against Karnataka State Contractors' Association president Kempanna for making "commission" allegations.



WHAT NEXT

- Azad's exit demolishes Cong prospects in the J&K elections
- BJP says it is ready to welcome Azad, but it could be counterproductive to both sides
- Since Azad is said to be getting a lot of traction, the better option for him would be to quickly float a regional party
- It will give him more time to consolidate unlike Amarinder Singh in Punjab who had just a few months before polls to launch his party
- Given Azad's good rapport with Modi, his party could get into an electoral arrangement with the BJP, just like Amarinder did
- But whether or not the BJP would want to project him as the CM face is a big question

Veteran leader ends five-decade association with party, accuses Sonia of letting her son destroy the consultative mechanism

Azad from the Congress, Ghulam Nabi roasts Rahul

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

IN a body blow to the Congress, veteran leader Ghulam Nabi Azad on Friday ended his five decades association with the party. In his scathing five-page resignation letter to party president Sonia Gandhi, Azad called her a "nominal figurehead" as all important decisions are taken by her "immature" son Rahul, or worse, his "security guards and PAs".

Azad said he was giving up all party positions, including primary membership, as affairs in the party have touched the nadir. "The situation in the Congress has reached such a point of no return that now 'proxies' are being propped up to take over the leadership of the party. This happened because the leadership in the past eight years has tried to foist a non-serious individual at the helm of the party," the former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister said in his letter. He accused Rahul of demolishing the consultative mechanism, sidelining senior leaders and letting "inexperienced sycophants" run the party.

This paper was the first to report in January that Azad, a prominent leader of the Group of 23, was on his way out.

Terming the entire organisational election process a "farce and a sham", Azad said no election has been held at any level of the organisation anywhere in the country.

In a show of solidarity, many Jammu and Kashmir Congress leaders also quit the party. They include Ghulam Mohmmad Saroori, Choudhary Muhammad Akram, Muhammad Amin Bhat, Gulzar Ahmad, Abdur Rashid Dar, R S Chib, Jugal Kishore Sharma, Sham Lal Bhagat, Naresh Gupta and Salman Nazmi.

The Congress said Azad's resignation was unfortunate and its timing awful, coming at a time the party is engaged in combating the BJP on issues of price rise and unemployment. Several Congress leaders criticised Azad for his personal attack on Rahul.

"A man who has been treated with the greatest respect by the Congress leadership has betrayed it by his vicious personal attacks which reveal his true character. GNA's DNA has been Modi-fied," tweeted party's Communication and Media incharge, Jairam Ramesh.

However, senior leader Prithviraj Chavan said the Congress should introspect why big leaders like Azad leave the party.

Azad's decision to quit at a time when we need to work together raises questions about his commitment - Mallikarjuna Kharge, Leader of Oppn in Rajya Sabha

Whatever disagreement he (Azad) might have had with Rahul Gandhi, he could have spoken to him DK Shivakumar, KPCC president

POWER PLAY

SOREN MAY BE BACK AS CM IF IT'S SIMPLE DISQUALIFICATION

SHAHID FARIDI @ New Delhi

IN what may appear to be a bizarre wish, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren is hoping that media reports on his disqualification come true and the Election Commission of India disqualifies him as a member of the state Legislative Assembly.

The CM, sources said, is however afraid that the election commission may not stop at merely taking away his membership. He fears it may even bar him from contesting elections for up to six years. Though the law says a legislator can be barred from contesting election only in the case of conviction by a court of law for more than two years, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leadership is bracing for all eventualities.

In a scenario where the commission disqualifies him as an MLA, he would have to resign as CM. But no law stops him from being re-elected on the same day as the leader of the ruling alliance comprising the JMM, Congress and the Rashtriya Janata Dal. As a leader of the ruling alliance, he may again stake his claim to form the government. The governor would have no option but to swear him in as CM.

Strategy meet

Leaders of the ruling coalition on Friday held a series of meetings to work out strategies. Among the ideas was to protect the MLAs by parking them in a resort in a friendly state such as Chhattisgarh, Bengal or Bihar to prevent poaching by the BJP

The state legislature has 81 seats. Soren's JMM has 30 MLAs, its ally Congress 18, and three seats are held by other smaller allies. Together the ruling alliance has a strength of 51. Even if the three Congress MLAs recently caught with unaccounted cash by the Bengal Police vote against him, the CM commands a comfortable majority.

The CM has held consultations with his allies and JMM MLAs about all possible scenarios. Sources said Soren would return as CM on the same day if the EC lets him off with a mere disqualification.

The other option is to appeal against the EC order in a high court. As per law, he would have eight weeks to appeal against the EC order in the court. If the court gives an adverse judgment, he would be allowed to appeal in the Supreme Court, which can decide the case as per its convenience.

Jharkhand Governor Ramesh Bais is likely to make the EC order public on Saturday and act as per its recommendation. He had sought the poll panel's advice on whether the CM holding a mining licence amounted to holding "an office of profit". The allegation against the CM was made by the BJP in a letter to the governor. The party had demanded Soren's disqualification under Sec 9(A) of the Representation of the People Act.

The CM in his defence said that the mining lease does not fall under the purview of the office of profit rules as he got a 10-year lease in 2008 when he was not CM. He said he had in any case applied for cancellation of the lease in the same month it was allotted.

BDA commissioner shunted out, day after SC rebuke

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE state government on Friday transferred BDA Commissioner Rajesh Gowda following an oral order by the Supreme Court conveying its displeasure over non-adherence of its orders by the commissioner while allotting alternative sites. Sites allotted to 5 persons, including Home Minister Araga Jnanendra, have come under scanner. Kumar G Naik, Additional Chief Secretary, Energy Department, has been given concurrent charge as BDA Commissioner.

SC's observations on Thursday came during a routine hearing of regularisation of properties in Dr Karanth Layout. The bench rapped Gowda for causing losses to BDA by offering alternative sites in RMV IInd Stage Extension for sites originally allotted in HSR Layout. A BDA official said, "Of 98 alternative sites allotted since Nov. 2021, SC questioned the five alternative sites measuring 50x80 sq ft allotted on recovered properties at RMV IInd Stage Extension to Home Minister, ex-Kalaburagi MP Basavaraj Ganpathrao Patil Sedam, Bagalkot MLA Veerabhadrayya Charantimath, ex-KPSC member M Nagaraj and an official's wife Geetha." P2

UAPA INVOKED

AGAINST FOUR ACCUSED IN SHIVAMOGGA STABBING CASE

Police have invoked the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act against four accused in the stabbing of 20-year-old cloth shop worker Prem Singh. The incident took place after tensions broke out over a portrait of V D Savarkar on I-Day | P4

SUSPENSION OFF, FIFA WORLD CUP ON

The international football federation (FIFA) lifted the suspension imposed on All India Football Federation on Friday. In a late communication, the FIFA said, "The Bureau of the FIFA Council has decided to lift the suspension that was imposed on the All India Football Federation (AIFF) due to undue third-party influence." This will mean India will now be eligible to host the Under 17 Women's World Cup scheduled to begin on October 11

EXPRESS READ

Govt to decide on pleas for activities at Idgah

A division bench of Acting Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice S Vishwajith Shetty of Karnataka HC on Friday modified the interim order of single judge that status quo be maintained at Chamarajpet Idgah Maidan, allowing the government to pass orders on applications seeking to use the land for religious and cultural activities. P2

BSY IN DELHI

MEETS MODI, NADDA

BJP's 'master strategist' BS Yediyurappa met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and party chief J P Nadda in New Delhi on Friday. He is likely to meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday, after he gets an appointment | P4

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